

another 10 minutes. Is that adequate time for the Senator?

I ask unanimous consent the Senator from Florida be recognized for up to 10 minutes to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, I compliment the Senator from Arkansas for her excellent statement about health care. As the Senator pointed out the need for a prescription drug benefit to modernize Medicare, it reminded me of an unbelievable story. I don't know that it is fact, but it sounded pretty solid.

The White House is floating a plan that someone on home health care would have to have a copay through Medicare in order to get that service. Certainly in our part of the country, home health care is an alternative to the more expensive care of a nursing home, and clearly it is a lot more expensive being in a hospital. And home health care, despite the expense, is clearly a lot better quality of life for the senior citizen than being in a nursing home or in a hospital if they can be medically treated appropriately and successfully in home health care.

The Senator talked so eloquently about medical care in the State of Arkansas. Would it not be devastating to senior citizens to have a copay on home health care that they now do not have under Medicare?

Mrs. LINCOLN. In some areas, it has gotten difficult even finding home health care that will serve rural areas. Certainly for myself, with aging parents who are at home and independent, home health care is essential.

If the question is whether or not they will serve and whether or not those individuals can afford or are able to provide a copay, it will be devastating.

In my home State of Arkansas, 49 percent of the people have an adjusted gross income of \$20,000 or less. We are a snapshot of what the rest of the Nation is going to be like. Florida has a lot of retirees and elderly, but for us as a percentage of our population, we rank in the top three. We are clearly a snapshot of where the rest of the country is going to be in terms of the percentage of our elderly population and the lack of services. Because we are rural, we have that lack of services.

Even the urban areas will be without the services if we do not look at Medicare reform and we do not start now looking at the ways we can make health care delivery more affordable. Prescription drugs is the most reasonable place to start. We have the technology, we have the development of pharmaceuticals that can help provide that quality of life, and we have home health care out there that can help keep down the costs of acute hospitalization, acute care in nursing homes, and other areas.

Making it cost prohibitive does not increase the availability or the accessibility of health care. We can keep our

loved ones in their homes and cared for at a reasonable cost, the Senator is exactly right.

It is so important to recognize we need to start now. We are so underprepared as a nation as to what will happen in the next 15 to 20 years when the baby boomers hit 65 and we have no geriatricians, no physicians, and a nursing shortage. The State of Massachusetts lost 25 or 26 nursing homes last year, all of which were 85 percent or better occupied.

We are not preparing ourselves for what will happen with our population, which is going to increase phenomenally in the aged category. Home health care and providing it in a way that is cost effective is absolutely essential. The Senator from Florida knows, and I am with him without a doubt, we have to make sure we focus on this issue. We need to do it sooner rather than later.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. It is amazing to me where they come up with the ideas from the administration to get savings out of Medicare, particularly when they start talking about making senior citizens pay copays on home health care, which is an activity that is desirable and saves money in the long run by giving seniors an alternative to the hospital and nursing homes that are so much more expensive.

COMMANDER SCOTT SPEICHER

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Madam President, I rise to address a subject that is heavy on my heart. It goes back to 1991. The first American shot down and declared dead in the gulf war was Commander Scott Speicher of the U.S. Navy from Jacksonville, FL. He was pronounced by the Department of Defense, indeed, the then-Secretary of Defense, as having been killed in action.

We have learned over the intervening 11 years, the evidence strongly suggests Commander Speicher survived being shot down. That credible intelligence report indicates that someone who drove him from the crash site to the hospital has stepped forward as an eyewitness. For 11 years, his family in Jacksonville have pondered the question, Is he alive?

This is truly a gripping human drama. But it is just that more gripping because the U.S. military has a creed among pilots that when you have to punch out, you are going to have a rescue team that will come get you. Against all odds, they will come, try to find you, and get you out alive.

This awful question hangs over the CDR Scott Speicher case that we abandoned him.

So 11 years later, what we need to do is to use every avenue to try to find out, is he alive? Is he in Iraq? If he is, we need to get him out. If he is not, we need to find out the specific circumstances that led to his death after his apparent surviving being shot down in the Iraqi desert.

A couple of our Senators have been involved in this case: Senator BOB SMITH of New Hampshire and Senator PAT ROBERTS of Kansas. There is a Kansas connection with Commander Speicher. I kind of backed into this situation recently when I saw an opening, and I took it.

I was in Damascus, Syria, and spoke to some of our Embassy staff. Did they have any information? They had inquired of the Syrian Government a year ago and had no reply. So later that day, I found myself with Senator SHELBY and Congressman CRAMER in a 2-hour meeting with the Syrian President, President Assad, the son of the long-time Syrian President who had died a couple of years ago and has been succeeded by his son. I saw the opening, and I took it.

I asked the Syrian President if he would use his good offices and task his intelligence apparatus to see what they could find out from Iraq and their contacts with Iraqi intelligence activities.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent I be allowed to continue until such time as the majority leader arrives.

Mr. REID. Why don't we do it for a time certain because he may never arrive.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Five minutes?

Mr. REID. How about 5 o'clock?

Mr. NELSON of Florida. I thank the Senator from Nevada, our wonderful assistant majority leader.

This is a very important case that I wanted to explain to the Senate.

We were sitting there with the young President, with whom we have significant differences of opinion in the Middle Eastern crisis. We talked to him about Hezbollah and suggested he should pull off his support of that terrorist activity. We thanked him for his help with regard to our going after al-Qaida—and they have been helpful. We thanked him for his support, protecting our United States interests in Syria, particularly our Embassy that has no setback from the street in Damascus. At the time we were there, there was a 100,000-person demonstration. Of course, they had the riot police lined up shoulder to shoulder to protect our Ambassador's residence as well as the Embassy.

But I saw the opening. I asked him, and he said he would.

Later on, as a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, suddenly I found myself face to face, right over here in our Foreign Relations Committee room in the Capitol, with the Prime Minister of Lebanon. I told him the story. I told him the gripping story of a family; the children want to know, is their daddy alive? And the Prime Minister of Lebanon, Rafic Hariri, said he, too, would see through his good offices and his intelligence apparatus if they could find out any information.

I have spoken to Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Myers,

about asking. I have spoken to Secretary Rumsfeld, as recently as 35 minutes ago, about this case.

Because it is Iraq, it puts someone such as Secretary Rumsfeld in a difficult situation because he naturally is concerned, as we all are, about wanting to take out Saddam Hussein who, if he has not built, he certainly will be trying to build, weapons of mass destruction. We are going to have to protect the position of the United States and the free world by not letting him do that. So it makes it difficult for us at this particular time, trying to get information. It is so important in this gripping human drama.

In the late 1990s, the Department of Defense actually changed the status of Commander Speicher from "killed in action" to "missing in action." At some point, with further evidence, it may well be that they will consider changing the status, if the evidence is there, from "missing in action" to "prisoner of war." That, of course, would be welcome news because that would mean that he is alive. Then we would have to address the question of how to get him home to his loved ones.

It is going to take the attention of a lot of people. I have written to the Embassies in that region of the world, asking our Ambassadors to ask their friends and their contacts, to see if we can get a little snippet of information. We owe this to the family. But we owe it to every military pilot, past, present, and future, who needs to have the confidence to know, if they are shot down, the rescue forces are coming to get them and we are not going to abandon them.

There is now talk that Iraq will invite a delegation to come to investigate. If it is another charade, as were some of the investigations as to whether or not there are weapons of mass destruction, then that is not going to be profitable. It should be a high-level delegation so it will be accorded the respect of the receiving Iraqi Government in order that access will be given. For example, this eyewitness account that he was driven to the hospital from the crash site—what hospital? Let's see the records of the hospital. If he was released from the hospital, where was he sent? Was he sent to a prison? What prison? Let's see the records of that prison. Let's see tangible evidence so we can know the fate of CDR Scott Speicher.

The Nation owes this to our military. The Nation owes it to Commander Speicher's family.

I thank the Chair for the opportunity to share this matter with the Senate.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CARNAHAN). The clerk will call the roll. The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. HOLLINGS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HOLLINGS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I may proceed for 10 minutes as in morning business. I understand the leader and others will momentarily be on the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HOLLINGS. I thank the distinguished Presiding Officer.

THE FARM BILL

Mr. HOLLINGS. Madam President, my plea is to the brothers and sisters in the lodge this afternoon. It came to mind last evening, when I met with the maritime folks that if our Amtrak is about to be phased out in October, and rail transportation is about to end for the passengers, and if the airlines are all in financial difficulty, we need more American construction, American ships, crewed with American crews, and those kinds of things. Yet we are just about to pass a wonderful farm bill.

They have gotten together in a compromise on the farm legislation. This Senator has supported agriculture for nearly 50 years in public office. In fact, I took my farmers to the west coast. I found out, back 40 years ago, that our total farm income in South Carolina was around \$380 million, and out in Orange County, CA, one county had \$384 million in total farm income. So they knew something more about agriculture than we did. And we had a 100-year start in agriculture in the little State of South Carolina before they had even founded California.

So I have been in the vanguard, in the forefront of developing our corn and our soybeans. The grain elevator was constructed when I was Governor. I could go on down the list of the different caucuses we have developed and the trips we made with the farmers to the markets overseas.

Just please, I ask my farm friends, don't give me this protectionism talk about we are ruining trade and trade relations and trade agreements, having gotten all the subsidies, all the protection you could possibly imagine.

They have gotten this 73-some-odd-billion-dollar farm bill. They get all the subsidies, which I support. And I hope the Senate supports it. They get the Ex-Im Bank to finance.

I see one of my agricultural Senator friends coming to the Chamber. I am sure he is not going to talk about protectionism. I am trying to get some of the farm votes to help us on fast track.

Then they get the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. They get all the help.

I experienced this when I campaigned out in Iowa in the '80s. They had me on an early morning news show there in Des Moines, and they said: Senator, how do you come from a textile State with all that protection and subsidies, and you expect to get the farm vote? They had no idea I did not get any subsidies. I was just trying to hold on to the jobs that we had.

So we need the farmers' help. Don't talk about Public Law 480. I know one of the Senators from Iowa has a favorite. After he gets his subsidies, then he comes on the floor and he says: No. We want to ship our PL-480s, our agriculture, under this Federal act to the other countries of the world because we can do it cheaper.

Well, we can produce agriculture cheaper, too. We almost did with the Freedom to Farm Act, but it did not work. But it can be done. So don't give us: Let's do away with it, having gotten all of mine, then I want yours, too. In essence, the farmers ought to wake up.

I want to show what has happened in agriculture with these charts I have in the Chamber. This chart shows that in 1996, under the Department of Commerce figures, we exported more than \$8 billion of corn annually. And you can see where it has gone. It went down in the year 2000 to about \$4.5 billion. Now, why?

The Chinese are not only producing textiles, they are producing corn.

I followed the statistical flow downwards of wheat. I asked about the Chinese, how do they do it? And the answer is, they are very clever. Now they are shipping their wheat to Korea, Japan, and other places, and still importing ours so as to keep an appearance of the need for wheat. But, actually, they are exporting more than they are importing.

Let's look at the agriculture surpluses from the chart I have in the Chamber. I want everyone to know that we are not only losing our manufacturing capability, our industrial backbone, but the United States has lost agriculture surplus since NAFTA.

Beginning in 1994 we had about a \$1 billion surplus with Mexico and Canada in agriculture. Now that we have free trade, free trade, free trade, we have a deficit of close to \$1.5 billion. Well, we are bound to lose with the higher standard of living in the United States of America. We are bound to lose some industrial jobs. But we are going to pick up agriculture.

Ah, no, sirree, we did not pick it up. They are losing their shirt and don't even know it. That is what we want our farmer Senators to know about. They are losing their shirt and don't even know it. They have been going out of business. And you are going back home and saying: Look, look what we have done. We have helped you. You need even more protection.

Here is what has happened with respect to citrus. We went from a \$700 million surplus to about \$650 million surplus in our exports. We have our Senator here who said it was sort of immoral. We had a moral obligation to go along with the Andean trade pact. They needed help. We are trying to get them out of drugs and tell them to grow bananas and pineapples. That is what it is all about.

What do you think we have gotten from Colombia? Not a thing in that